

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 TEL AV 08465 061313Z
ACTION NODS-00

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
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AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
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S E C R E T TEL AVIV 8465

EXDIS DIST AS NODIS

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1 AND 2
TAGS: PEPR PINT LE IS
SUBJ: LEBANON - WEIZMAN ASKS THAT U.S. PASS MESSAGE TO
SYRIANS IMMEDIATELY

REF.: TEL AVIV 8464

1. WEIZMAN TELEPHONED ME AGAIN AT 1345 HOURS JULY 6 WITH AN EVEN HIGHER LEVEL OF CONCERN ABOUT LEBANESE CRISIS THAN EXPRESSED IN HIS EARLIER CALL. HE SAID HE HAD BEEN ON THE PHONE WITH A NUMBER OF ISRAELI CABINET MINISTERS, INCLUDING THE PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER DAYAN, AND THAT ALL WERE EXPRESSING THE DEEPEST WORRY ABOUT THE CONTINUING SYRIAN OFFENSIVE. POLITICAL PRESSURES WERE BUILDING RAPIDLY IN ALL OF THE PARTIES FOR ISRAEL TO TAKE ACTION OF SOME SORT TO PREVENT THE CHRISTIANS FROM BEING OVER-RUN.

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HE HAD JUST HEARD A REPORT THAT SARKIS WAS ON THE POINT OF RESIGNING IF INDEED HE HAS NOT ALREADY RESIGNED.

2. CHOOSING HIS WORDS WITH UNACCUSTOMED CARE, WEIZMAN ASKED THAT WE PASS URGENTLY TO THE SYRIANS THE MESSAGE THAT "THERE ARE DEFINITE LIMITS TO WHAT WE CAN STAND." HE REITERATED THAT ISRAEL HAD NO RPT NO DESIRE TO

INTERVENE MILITARILY, AND INDEED ADMITTED THAT THEIR OPTIONS FOR INTERVENTION WERE EXTREMELY UNAPPETIZING MILITARILY. BUT HE SAID THAT THE HUMANITARIAN AND STRATEGIC FACTORS WERE BOTH CONVENING TO RAISE PRESSURES FOR SOME SORT OF ACTION, AND THEY WOULD CONTINUE TO BUILD UNLESS THE SYRIANS DESISTED FROM THEIR PRESENT COURSE.

3. WEIZMAN INSISTS THAT THEIR LATEST INFORMATION FROM THE CHRISTIANS DIRECTLY IS THAT THEY ARE BEING CRUSHED BY SYRIAN ARTILLERY. THE ISRAELIS ASSUME AT SOME POINT THE PALESTINIANS WILL STEP IN TO JOIN IN THE "KILL," AND THAT THE END RESULT WILL BE A "SYRIANIZED LEBANON" WHICH WILL INEVITABLY CHANGE THE STRATEGIC PICTURE FOR ISRAEL. HE SAID THAT THE LAST THING HE WANTED TO DO WAS TO BECOME INVOLVED AGAIN IN LEBANON, BUT THAT "SOMEONE HAS GOT TO DO SOMETHING."

4. WHEN I QUERIED WHAT HE WAS SAYING TO THE CHRISTIANS, HE SAID THEY HAD TRANSMITTED A MESSAGE QUITE RECENTLY TO URGE THAT THE CHRISTIANS "AS FAR AS POSSIBLE SHOULD NOT PROVOKE THE SYRIANS AND SHOULD HOLD THEIR OWN FIRE." YET, HE SAID, THE SYRIANS CONTINUED THEIR ARTILLERY BARRAGES UP TO THIS MOMENT.

5. I ASKED WEIZMAN AGAIN IF HE HAD CONSIDERED CAREFULLY
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THE MESSAGE HE WAS ASKING US TO TRANSMIT. HE SAID HE LEFT IT TO OUR GOOD JUDGMENT HOW TO CONVEY IT, BUT THAT IT WAS VITAL THAT IT BE CONVEYED. HE SAID HE HAD EVEN CONSIDERED USING HIS DIRECT CHANNEL TO GENERAL GAMASY TO ASK GAMASY TO PASS THE MESSAGE, BUT HAD BEEN ASSURED BY HIS COLLEAGUES THAT WE HAD FAR MORE INFLUENCE WITH THE SYRIANS THAN THE GYPTIANS AT THIS JUNCTURE.

6. I SAID I WOULD RELAY HIS REQUEST IMMEDIATELY TO WASHINGTON.

7. I WOULD STRONGLY URGE THAT WE BEGIN TO ADDRESS THE SYRIANS AT THE HIGHEST AVAILABLE LEVEL IN ORDER TO GET ACROSS TO ASSAD HOW SERIOUS THE SITUATION IS BECOMING. SOME SORT OF MESSAGE FROM THE ISRAELIS SHOULD BE CONVEYED, BUT I WOULD SUGGEST IT BE COUCHED IN CAREFUL TERMS. IT IS APPARENT THAT WEIZMAN HAS NO STOMACH FOR MILITARY ACTION AT THIS POINT, BUT IT IS ALSO APPARNT RPT APPARENT THAT THE POLITICAL PRESSURE COOKER HERE IS HEATING UP FAST SO LONG AS THE SYRIANS CONTINUE THEIR PRESENT COURSE.
LEWIS

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